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PROGRESS AND THE GOOD LORD

DANIEL BERRIGAN AN OPEN LETTER TO JOE O'ROURKE
SISYPHUS POST-WATERGATE RECONSTRUCTION—MEDIA
MICHAEL NOVAK BROTHER McNAUGHT, BROTHER O'ROURKE
COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR. COLOR TELEVISION
SEAN CRONIN THE TROUBLES IN IRELAND
DEWEY D. WALLACE, JR. METHODISM AND SOCIAL AWAKENING
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NEWS & VIEWS

Feeney & O'Rourke

The chapter excerpted by *Publisher's Weekly* from Frank Sheed's new book, *The Church and I* (Doubleday), combined wit and wisdom in typically generous Sheed measure.

The wisdom was pervasive; the wit sometimes near-classical; e.g., the discovery made upon launching into book publishing in America: "discounts are to the clergy what sex is to the laity, an itch and a constant preoccupation."

Particularly poignant — and timely — were some paragraphs dealing with Father Leonard Feeney, the Boston Jesuit who initially went afoul of the Society and the Church for teaching what had once been taught about the exclusivity of salvation, and who eventually found himself heaved out of Society and Church both.

In the handling of Father Feeney, Sheed caught—this didn't make *PW*—"a troubling echo of the handling of the Modernists at the turn of the century. Like them he was condemned but not answered. . . . Everybody would have been helped by a full-length discussion."

"One understands the desire to avoid confrontation, which would involve the admission that earlier statements of authority need amplifying or correction, but experience suggests that confrontation can only be postponed," Sheed continued. "On this particular matter it still awaits us."

The comment is irrefutable.

The paradox for history is that as the Feeney case heads towards a happy denouement, another Feeney-type case is being created.

For almost at the same time that Bishop Bernard Flanagan of Worcester was confirming a *Boston Globe* report that Feeney had been quietly "reconciled" to the Church some months earlier, Church officials were completing the decisive steps against Father Joseph O'Rourke, hounding him out of the Jesuit order.

The complaints against the accused were disparate, but, oh, the parallels of tactic: secrecy; divinization of authority; resort to device (adherence to a vow) for achievement of purpose; unwillingness to open issues raised to discussion in the wider community of believers.

These parallels have been cited before. Note, for instance, the *Commonweal* editorial of Sept. 20. Yet repetition serves a purpose.

Summing up, it is one thing to repeat the Feeney mistakes. Frank Sheed's service is to remind that the depressing business goes back to Loisy, Tyrrell and Von Hügel, to say nothing of earlier history.

History is prelude, they say, but must it be forever so with respect to the exercise of authority in the Church?

Crumbling Foundations

The Economist of London has taken a look at American philanthropic organizations, and finds all foundations in trouble. Their common malady: the erosion of wealth through the drop in the stock market.

The Ford Foundation, we've read everywhere, has suffered a portfolio loss of from $3 billion to $2 billion over the past year. But Ford's woe is everyone's woe, according to the magazine.

The Carnegie establishment—"one of the oldest and the best," in *The Economist*'s words—is contending with a decline of 40 percent in portfolio value; Rockefeller, one-third; Mott, Kettering, Duke and Luce, as much as 50 percent.

The toll extends to some of the new foundations "which were counted upon to boost foundation largesse," among them Clark (based on the Avon Products fortune) and Rowland (Polaroid).

The Economist, as a consequence, looks for grants from foundations to decline by as much as one-third in the near future, if not immediately.

Hit will be the orthodox recipients: colleges, universities, hospitals, welfare agencies. Hit harder will be "the more venturesome": environment and civil rights groups, for instance, who depend on foundation support for their solvency. The overall reduction in grants "may leave little or nothing" for them, says *The Economist*.

What about the future?

"A recovery in market values will help," sums up *The Economist*, "but the erosion in [the foundations'] wealth has gone so far that the future of philanthropy in the United States is now in question. Certainly, the golden age of the foundations is over."

A Rip-Off?

Speaking recently at Fordham University, CBS newsman Dan Rather termed the Ford pardon of Nixon "a blunder of the first order," and speculated that it was issued as precipitously as it was in order to head off the imminent indictment of the former President and subvert complicated legal proceedings which might have lasted into the 1976 Presidential election. It was speculation with which most of us are well familiar.

Rather, a Nixon-made celebrity, drew a standing-room-only crowd at Fordham, but, as is so often the case with professional media people, he offered a minimum of hard news. No surprise. No big media outlet is paying its staffers to explode news breaks beyond the outlet; media people—whether reporters, commentators or documentary anchormen—are sensitive to the point. If Fordham's purpose was to generate media publicity for the university from the Rather talk, it didn't have a chance from the start, at least not by way of coverage.

Rather's talk was warmly received. Predictably, impact came not in what was said, but in ensuing debate over whether the speaker was worth the price—a perennial topic, it seems, at Fordham.

Again this year the issue was raised by *The Ram*, the student newspaper, in posing to the sponsoring student organization, American Age, the possibility that it might have obtained someone less well known to give an equally good speech at a more economical price. Rather's fee was $2,500.

Odds and Ends

— Not the smallest irony of the economic summit conference, in the eyes of the *Boston Globe*, was that the Public Service Broadcast network carried the proceedings live across the nation with a grant from the Exxon Corporation. During the conference, American oil companies were blamed for cooperating with Arab nations in hiking prices to unprecedented levels, and several speakers demanded a tax on excess oil profits.

—Another aspect of the new morality: Roselia Maternity Hospital in Pittsburgh, one of the largest and most modern Catholic facilities for unwed mothers, has become the new headquarters of the Pittsburgh St. Vincent de Paul Society and will be used also as a low-income boarding home for older men and women.

— From Evans and Novak, no less: "So many Nixon aides remain as the walking dead, drawing pay but doing no work, that the White House today is a political charnel house." That on Sept. 30. On Oct. 2, the resignations began to come, but like that of Dr./Fr. John McLaughlin, they were coming from second- and third-level personnel. The most notorious hustlers were still around. JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Mass Atrocities

Richmond Hill, N.Y.

To the Editors: One need have no feeling of nostalgia for the "old Church" to appreciate Prof. Michael True's "Latinization of West Roxbury" [July 26].

I'm old enough to remember the days when anyone—priest or layman—interested in liturgical reform was suspected of heresy, crypto-Communism or effeminacy. *Orate Fratres* gathered dust in the libraries of Catholic colleges and only Anglicans read it.

But, what we wanted was *more,* not less: more drama, greater graciousness, deeper dignity, a more vivid sense of reality of Church and Sacrament, a sharpened, more penetrating sense of the "spiritual"—"Turn but a stone and start an angel's wing." What we got, of course, was much, much less.

If we wanted the vernacular, it was not so that laymen could now mumble in English (if it be English!) what formerly the priest had mumbled in Latin. Rather, we wanted the people to share in the sheer excitement of the celebration of the Christian Mystery.

Until quite recently, no teacher of literature believed for one minute that the excitement of great poetry, drama, fiction could be conveyed by means of comic books; if "life has loveliness to sell," we thought, it must be paid for in proper coin. And the leaders—sometimes martyrs—of liturgical reform envisioned something of majesty and beauty. One, for example, writing in *Commonweal*—30 years ago?—said that if the Mass were to be made available in the vernacular, the English would have to be as distinguished and lovely as that in the Book of Common Prayer.

What we've got is really so atrocious that the Tridentine Mass looks magnificent by comparison! Would it be too difficult to allow each parish to have one Latin Mass on Sunday? They have it in Paris. My wife and I attended a Latin Mass in Notre Dame Cathedral—the priest had his back to the people—a reg-

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'NON-INVOLVEMENT'

Even in a nation which is becoming accustomed to being deceived by its public officials, the story of the CIA role in Chile is incredible. First there were the solemn affirmations, many of them under oath. State Department officials swore, for instance, that the U.S. government had followed a scrupulous policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Chile. So testifying under oath were Charles A. Meyer, former Assistant Secretary of State; Edward M. Korry, former Ambassador to Chile; and Harry W. Shlaudeman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State. Typical of the testimony was that of Mr. Meyer, in charge of Latin American affairs for the State Department at the time of the coup that overthrew the Allende regime. Said he: "We were religiously and scrupulously adhering to the policy of the government of the United States of non-intervention. We bought no votes, we funded no candidates, we promoted no coup." And former Ambassador Korry told a Senate subcommittee: "The United States did not seek to pressure, subvert, influence a single member of the Chilean Congress at any time in the entire four years of my stay. No hard line toward Chile was carried out at any time."

That was, so to speak, the testimony from the right hand. What was the left hand doing at the same time? Thanks to Congressman Michael Harrington of Massachusetts, we now know that the Central Intelligence Agency had been secretly authorized by the 40 Committee (headed by Henry Kissinger) to spend more than $8 million between 1970 and 1973 (the equivalent of $40 million at black market rates) in a covert attempt to make it impossible for the legally elected President Allende to govern in Chile. Presumably the CIA was satisfied that this result in fact came to pass slightly more than a year ago, when a bloody military coup took place that cost Allende his life.

How did the CIA—which means the United States of America—spend its money? The American dollars were originally spent in an effort to prevent Allende's election in the first place and then, when that failed, on efforts to "destabilize" his government. In now disclosed but then secret Congressional testimony, CIA head William E. Colby said his agency had spent $500,000 helping Allende's political opponents in the

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1970 election; $350,000 to bribe Chilean legislators to vote against him when the election had to be submitted to Congress, $5 million for later "destabilization" activities, and $1.5 million more for assistance to anti-Allende candidates in the 1971 elections. All this was in addition to a determined effort to cut off credit and tighten the economic screws on the Allende regime. So much for non-intervention.

With such disclosures, it would seem that the CIA cat was irretrievably out of the bag. Nonetheless, high-level efforts to justify and cover-up continued. At his Sept. 16 press conference, President Ford made a disturbing defense of CIA activities in Chile, citing national interest and saying that the Russians did the same thing or worse. In any case, he said, the CIA efforts were made only to preserve anti-Allende newspapers and opposition political parties—a line Secretary of State Henry Kissinger apparently sold him. Aside from anything else, this argument has an odd ring coming from an Administration that enthusiastically supports all kinds of repressive, fiercely right-wing regimes which totally disregard political or press freedom, from the Greece of the colonels to South Korea today—not to mention the totally oppressive regime that has succeeded President Allende in Chile. In any case, however, those who know the Chilean situation take strong exception to President Ford's explanation; the Allende regime had many faults, they say, but opposition papers and political parties were never suppressed. Subsequent revelations disclosed that Mr. Ford was either misinformed or disingenuous in taking this line on CIA activities in Chile; in actual fact a good part of the American money secretly funneled into Chile went into financing the strikes and demonstrations that preceded and ultimately helped to bring about Allende's downfall.

After the fact, what is one to say about the CIA efforts in Chile? It is hard to see them as anything but a national disaster. The Allende government had many flaws and might well have fallen on its own; as things are now, however, the United States is held responsible in the eyes of the world for the bloodthirsty junta that overthrew him—a regime characterized by the execution of literally thousands of Chileans, the systematic and widespread torture of political prisoners, the ruthless suppression of the press and all political opposition. When certain leaders of foreign nations previously expressed concern over covert activities of the CIA, it was easy to dismiss such fears as paranoid. But when Ambassador Daniel P. Moynihan says reports on CIA activities in Chile have confirmed Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's "worst suspicions and genuine fears" about U.S. policy toward India, how can he effectively counter such fears?

It will not be easy to undo the harm that the CIA has done to the national honor in this latest unsavory episode, nor is the matter helped by such inept defense as that given by Mr. Ford. As Senator Frank Church of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee commented after the Presidential press conference: "It seems he declared that the United States respects no law other than the law of the jungle in its dealings with foreign countries. He equates us with the Russians. I thought there was a difference, and the difference is what it's all about." We agree with Senator Church. Despite the harm that has been done, however, some good can come out of this disreputable affair if only Congress will now insist on thoroughgoing, effective and continuing supervision of the CIA's operations. CIA Director Colby recently told Congress that concentration on intelligence-gathering and abandonment of covert operations like those in Chile "would not have a major impact on our current activities or the current security of the United States." Why not take CIA-man Colby at his word and put an end once and for all to bad business like that carried out in the United States' name in Chile?

WASHINGTON REPORT

POST-WATERGATE RECONSTRUCTION—MEDIA

The press functions like one continuous unfulfilled New Year's resolution.

Its performance during the corrupt Nixon Presidency suggests the press should either claim less or perform better. Otherwise, it will suffer additional distrust, even disrepute, on the part of Americans.

Prospects for improvement are discouraging, because, if for no other reason, editors are more snarlingly sensitive to criticism than those in any other occupation—except, perhaps, bankers. Yet, its freedom is as bountiful as its sense of responsibility is in short supply. Prepublication censorship was quite properly demolished two centuries ago; post-publication censorship has dissolved as a result of the Sullivan and Pentagon Papers cases involving the good, grey *New York Times*. However, the press seeks additional protection from Congress in the form of a so-called "press-shield" law. What Congress giveth, it can taketh away, the press lords

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should keep in mind, afflicted as they are by delusions of moral grandeur.

We can let those, who delight in profound philosophical debates, wrestle about where to draw the line between freedom and responsibility, liberty and license. The practical problem, considering the foul mood of Americans toward newspapers, radio and television, is simply to promptly reform their technical operations and format coverage. The difference in approach is, as in reasoning, inductive rather than deductive.

Television and radio performance is dismal. Their "news" programs, from which most Americans obtain their knowledge about current events, mostly consist of a pretty voice reading stories provided for a fee by the two major national news-gathering associations, the Associated Press (AP) and United Press International (UPI). Program directors try to disguise the reading-by-rote. At least, Frank Blair of the NBC "Today" show is honest about it—he openly reads the news dispatches on camera. But there is one excuse for radio and TV—each is primarily designed to entertain, not inform.

Newspapers have no such excuse. Editors, amid drinks and smoke of their annual self-congratulatory conventions, insist their job historically has been to "afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted." The reverse is, in fact, the rule.

With few exceptions, newspapers are community bulletin boards for the middle-class—or, more precisely, for the orthodoxy of their middle-class readers.

The press peddles crime and catastrophe—padded with good-will editorials, sometimes simply rewrites of editorials originally appearing in the *New York Times.*

Journalism schools emphasize irrelevant accuracies—how high is the steeple? The schools have all the intellectual content of "a training school for A&P clerks," as A. J. Liebling once wrote about the one he attended, perhaps the most prestigious, the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

The press, until the ghettos erupted and the traffic jams worsened, ignored among other major stories:

*Migration of an estimated three million Americans from farm to city between 1957 and 1964.

*Creation of slovenly white suburbs by means of federally-funded housing and interstate highway programs designed by Congress to favor private interests.

Newspapers are shot through with contradictions. They laud "Brotherhood Week" each year on the editorial pages, while employing no black reporters in the newsrooms. They bleed editorially from time to time for the poor, while accepting deceptive advertising placed by food and furniture stores and running color-photos of baked Alaska and other expensive recipes on their "women's pages." Even the best of the newspapers, the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* among others, run weekly financial and real-estate sections that are straight shills for the most base motivations in those economic sectors.

Unfortunately, the fabled critics of the press are dead or retired—Liebling, Seldes and Hollenbeck. The 1947 Hutchins Commission's report on freedom of the (American) press is a dusty curiosity in libraries. At present, a monthly tabloid-sized publication, [*More*], seeks to monitor the media, but, instead, tangles itself up in intra muralisms that interest press people, but are unfathomable to laymen who wish to know what's wrong.

There have been tons of newsprint spent over what's wrong. Contrary to George Seldes, it's not that advertisers control news-columns, although their footprints are not uncommon in newsrooms. It's not so simple as a conspiracy of economic interests. In fact, there's less "cooking" of the news these days.

Nor is it another favorite bête-noire of critics—the prevalence of communities in which the only newspaper(s) is owned by one publisher. Responsible publishers in Providence, Louisville, Atlanta and Eugene (Ore.) have demonstrated that pretty good newspapers —fair and comprehensive—can be produced without competition. However, the prevailing pattern may be typified by the one-ownership morning and afternoon newspapers in Worcester, Mass., either of which may be thoroughly read in about seven minutes—even if the lighting's bad.

No, a major problem, perhaps *the* major problem, is more elusive. It might be termed a consensus approach to the news—after all, the *original* Section 2 of Article I of the Constitution stated a consensus attitude—that a Negro was three-fifths of a white person for purposes of allocation of seats to states in the House of Representatives. A consensus approach, reflecting one or more major orthodoxies among readers, is reinforced by ill-informed editors, lazy reporters paid low salaries and standard news-coverage techniques that shape the content of the news itself.

Readers of the "better papers" and viewers watching only educational TV and/or radio don't comprehend the shoddiness of most newspapers, north, south, east and west—although the opinion-ridden, columnist-laden *New York Post* does provide for interested New Yorkers an example of the severe shortcomings of papers elsewhere.

A David Broder may stumble, a Mary McGrory may mislead because of a journalistic "love-affair" with a public personality, or a James Reston may go stale. But such drawbacks are minor compared to the faults of most reporting. In fact, relatively few readers are aware of these three talents even exist. And this brings us to the press associations, AP and UPI, the so-called "wire services."

The AP boasts that three million words of copy move each day through its vast automatic teletype circuits to more than 1260 dailies and 3350 radio and TV

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stations in the United States. Days go by without either the *Washington Post* or the *New York Times* printing an AP (or UPI) story on page one. But for all but a handful of newspapers the wire services are the only source for news beyond their immediate circulation "by-lines"; they can cite that of Walter Mears, the AP political reporter, not Broder or McGrory or Reston. More people read his dispatches than any other reporter's. Mears is a good reporter. So are other wire service reporters covering national news such as Walter Leubsdorf and Steve Gerstel. UPI's Frank Eleazar knew more about the House of Representatives than the combined staffs of the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times'* Washington bureau.

But as Timothy Crouse points out in his book about the 1972 Presidential campaign reportage, *Boys on the Bus*, the AP and UPI stories on major matters—politics, civil rights, labor disputes, etc.—are overly cautious: "There is an inverse proportion between the number of persons a reporter reaches and the amount he can say. The larger the audience, the more inoffensive and inconclusive the article must be. Many of the wire men are repositories of information they can never convey."

Wire-service dispatches are the staple of American newspapers. A news editor often will prefer a wire-service story over that of his newspaper's own reporter's coverage of the same event if the latter's is not in conformity with the wire-service story. And wire-service reporters emphasize superficial conflicts. After all, they are weaned on fires and accidents. "If you don't learn how to write an eight-car fatal on Route 128 (Boston), you're gonna be in big trouble," Mears says. The deeper controversies become slighted because they violate the consensus-syndrome.

Moreover, the wire-services' coverage of Congress, for example, is deficient. A reporter finds himself covering more than one Congressional hearing. Consequently, he attends one where he finds a witness' press-release, incorporating his testimony. He scurries off to his other assigned hearing, unable to stay for the more productive questioning of the witness. It's happened that a wire-service reporter has covered four hearings in one morning. His stories become coverage by press-release, plus a snippet of testimony shared by an understanding reporter able to remain throughout hearings. The AP reports that 25 to 30 percent of its domestic news each day carries Washington date-lines. At the same time, the wire-service reporter is drilled to remember that at any minute of his working day there's a client newspaper going to press. Inadequate staffing is, then, aggravated by time pressures.

Another deficiency, seldom analyzed, is the role of the "rewrite" reporter. He, or she, sits in a newsroom, accepts notes over the telephone from a reporter and then, without first-hand knowledge, rewrites the notes into a story for publication. The failings of this technique often overcome the advantage—the technical one of speeding coverage of an event into print. The failing is tremendous as practiced by the weekly newsmagazines. Tens of thousands of words conveyed from their Washington bureaus to the home-office in Manhattan where unknowing editors select those stories to be included in the next issue and turn morasses of words over to rewrite men to be reworked into easy-flowing narratives. The product is notoriously unreliable. The editors in New York have reworked Woodrow Wilson's definition of news as "the atmosphere of events" into a formula: news is what the editor says it is.

Another deficient news-gathering method is that of the news-conference. The Presidential is the most widely known.

In December, 1929, with the stunning October stock-market crash reverberating throughout the country, President Hoover held a press conference. In response to one question, he reported that Christmas retail purchases were running at a volume comparable to the previous Christmas season's level. There was apparently only one other question from reporters—as to whether the newly-elected President of Mexico would sleep at the White House during his forthcoming visit. President Hoover replied that he didn't expect that to happen.

But that occurred 45 years ago, comes the challenge. But in 1974, a recent televised press conference of President Ford's shows a worsening of the format—individual reporters strutting on camera as they asked questions . . . disjointed questions about the Nixon pardon . . . no informed questioning about the dolorous economic condition.

Additional practices compound inadequate news coverage—reporters who collect news-sources as lawyers collect clients, reporters huddling after joint interviews to make certain they all agree on the "lead" of the story each will write (comparable to price-fixing among corporations), and editors who lurch from issue to issue for prime coverage, a sort of interest-spasm of the day approach. There are other flawed practices, one of which is the ground-rules reporters, individually or collectively, accept as a basis for interviewing a political personnage in Washington:

1. God's in his Heaven, Rev. Billy Graham said today (on-the-record).
2. God's in his Heaven, an authoritative source said today (not for attribution).
3. God's in his Heaven, it can be reliably reported (an extreme form of the back-grounder without attribution).
4. Off-the-record rule under which the Rev. Graham tells reporters that God's in his Heaven, but reporters can't print it in any form or shape.

Occasionally, reporters refuse to be bound by such rules originally designed to oblige the reporter without embarrassing his source. Occasionally, there is mentioned

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a need to reevaluate the whole constellation of news-coverage in Washington, whether by wire-services, the *Post*, the *Times* or the Washington bureaus of daily newspapers.

Competent news-coverage is in a class with Samuel Johnson's observation when told about there being a woman minister in the neighborhood: the wonder, he said, like that of a dog walking on hind-legs, is not that it's done well, but that it's done at all.

The press is misleading itself in the wake of Watergate. The persistence of two *Washington Post* reporters, Woodward and Bernstein, is not to be undervalued; nor is it to be overlooked that both were inexperienced reporters who uncovered pieces of the scandal, while for month-after-month big-shot newspapermen in Washington scoffed or ignored them. But primarily it was the persistence of Congressional committees and federal judges and juries that exposed the corruption of the Nixon Presidency.

The downfall of Nixon isn't being greeted joyously everywhere. Alan Otten of the *Wall Street Journal* recently, wrote: "While the press is on a jag of self-satisfaction and self-congratulations, there is an unhappily large number of Americans who aren't overjoyed by the Watergate exposures—in fact, they're annoyed, angry and hostile." They are joined on the left by those who recall the press's glamorization of Presidents, the press's self-censorship of our bombing of Cambodia and more than faint indications that working reporters voluntarily, and sometimes for pay, help the CIA and other intelligence agencies. Blacks share the distrustful mood. The *Washington Post*, in a recent series, noted that during the first 19 weeks of this year, nearly 1500 news-items were broadcast on the CBS Evening News, but of these only 20 focused on black problems. And, of the 20, nine dealt with the so-called "Zebra killings" in San Francisco and two about Hank Aaron's home-run achievements.

Customarily, Presidents and their assistants and the reporters assigned to the White House are locked in fond, not deadly embrace. The role is mistakenly symbiotic, not adversary as it should be. Washington correspondents, assuming even the best of intentions by officers of government, should remember an observation of a British government official to reporters: "You think we lie to you. But we don't lie, really we don't. However, when you discover that, you make even a greater error. You think we tell you the truth."

The news media are in trouble; only a few of their practitioners understand this.

"A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it," James Madison remarked, "is but a prologue to a farce or tragedy or perhaps both."

We shall see if press people turn away from divvying up with politicians free news and free publicity in time to reform formats of coverage before public opinion unfairly shackles them with restraints believed permanently long ago cast off.

SISYPHUS

ROY SCHEELE

THE GAP IN THE CEDAR
In memory of my father

I saw this much from the window:
the branch spring lightened into place
with a lithe shudder of snow.

Whatever bird had been there,
chickadee or sparrow,
had so vanished into air,

resilient, beyond recall,
it had to be taken on faith
to be taken at all.

In the moment it took the tree
to recover that trembling
something went wide in me—

there was a rush of wings,
the air beaten dim with snow,
and then I saw through the swirling.

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BROTHER McNAUGHT, BROTHER O'ROURKE

MICHAEL NOVAK

In an earlier column (May 31), I opposed the politicalization of homosexuality and the ideology of "Gay Liberation." Yet as many as ten percent of our population may be homosexual; and such a percentage, subject to cycles and modifications, may be typical for most historical eras. A sound Catholic tradition teaches both respect for intractable facts and adaptation to human fallibility. I continue to believe that homosexual acts, like adulterous acts, are both attractive to some and contrary to the Catholic ideal. But many other kinds of behavior, also wrong, are manifested by Catholics every day.

All the more reason to appeal strongly to the editors of *The Michigan Catholic* to reinstate Brian McNaught, 27, who held a column in that paper until he publicly admitted that he was a homosexual. (I am grateful that he has been continued as a staff member.) There is good reason to believe that a considerable number of highly placed Catholics—prelates, clergy, some nuns, and laity—are also homosexuals; that some saints have been homosexuals; and that among artists, writers, actors, politicians and other Catholics in specialized public careers, perhaps ten percent are homosexuals. Surely, a high percentage of Catholics are fornicators, or adulterers, or tax evaders, or criminals, or petty tyrants, or gossips, or the like, for our church prides itself on being a "church of sinners." Homosexuality is not the worst of sins and, in any case, "the sinner is at the heart of Christianity."

Thus, if Brian McNaught is confessing publicly to a failing of his, who shall toss the first stone? Are the editors of *The Michigan Catholic* and the prelates, clergy and leading laymen of Michigan willing to make similar public confessions of their own serious failings? The Church needs homosexual columnists. If we didn't have any, we certainly wouldn't be manifesting the signs of grace we ought to. (We have had, for our instruction, occasional homosexual popes, military popes.)

Perhaps McNaught is under fire because he publicly announced his failing. Or perhaps becaues he wants to argue that overt homosexual acts are not sinful. What would be a more powerful witness to authentic teaching than to allow him and others to debate the issue in the paper? What clearer way would there be to state the present understanding of the Catholic people than to let it emerge under open controversy? *The Michigan Catholic* might even run a little notice under McNaught's column: "Catholic faith teaches that overt homosexual acts are dangerous to the state of grace." (Indeed, each columnist in the Catholic press might accept an appropriately similar disclaimer. The sins of bishops could be written underneath their names upon the last page of their pastoral letters. Such warnings could purify the church, even empty it.)

* * *

In a related matter, my friend Father Joseph O'Rourke, S.J., has also raised good questions even while, it seems, he errs. The baptism of infants is intended as a public, social act and is predicated on the good faith and good will of parents and guardians; otherwise, it would be better to wait until the infant is of an age to declare her faith herself. One must weigh the consequences of symbolic actions. One must estimate competing evils, in deciding which of two to oppose. The church is not the only culprit; the new morality is also suspect.

On the one side, it seems that the pastor of the child and the archdiocesan office were implicated in one evil; surely, there are adulterers in Boston, and members of the Mullins gang, and others, who are allowed to baptize their children, and scandal does not result. Present political tensions over abortion laws too much inflamed the atmosphere. (And, after the fact, authorities acted clumsily in bringing disciplinary action against Father O'Rourke—both too harshly and without open procedures.)

On the other side, middle-class morality is spreading like the Boswash smog: anti-institutional, self-congratulatory, petulant, antinomian. The self—in this morality—is law and symbols belong to those who invent them or employ them. The inadequacies of the self are semantically transformed into virtues like "independence," "liberation," "openness."

Under the slogans of an open church, liberation, *aggiornamento*, liberal Catholicism, radical Catholicism—all of them excellent slogans—a highly problematic middle-class morality is being too uncritically baptized as Catholic. An essay on Joe O'Rourke's Boston baptism in *New Times*, for example, fulfilled my worst fears about what the event might come to symbolize. The sacraments, wrote the author, belong to the people—as though the people were constituted by any 200 who gather *now*, *today*; as though the people did not also include clouds of witnesses from generation to generation, hundreds of millions who shaped unto themselves institutions that might, quite fallibly, develop a dictionary of signs, a record of right usage, and a system of sanctions.

Contemporary middle class morality, particularly among the highly educated, tears apart resistant institutions to make them subservient to its ends. It is a corrosive, self-aggrandizing, ambiguous morality. I wish Joe O'Rourke

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PROGRESS AND THE GOOD LORD

ERAZIM KOHAK

Must progressive impulses be severed from religious contexts?

The good Lord, it seems, is highly ambivalent about progress, and progressives reciprocate the sentiment. Clement Attlee is said to have described a socialist as an Englishman with a Bible. Instances of religious inspiration can in fact be found in progressive movements throughout the West and throughout history.

At the same time, a strong case could be made for the proposition that progressive impulses, though religiously rooted, must become severed from their religious context before they can become a driving force of progress. Just as Marxist ideas remain repressive as long as they are the exclusive property of a Marxist party in power, so religious ideas in the hands of established churches have had a profoundly regressive effect on Western social development. The Lutheran church was the pillar of the throne in Prussia, the Orthodox church in Russia, the Catholic church in Austria, and in turn the respective thrones were pillars of their churches. In central Europe, the clergy were known as "black police," while among progressives freedom from all remnants of religious faith was considered the sign of an open mind.

Feuerbach formulated the dominant progressive view of religion most clearly: religion is the highest ideology, projecting human ideals and aspirations into heaven. While speaking of ideals, it leaves the world stripped in poverty and backwardness and detours its energies into the hope of heaven. Progress is contingent on bringing human hopes and aspirations back to earth, channeling human efforts to transforming this world rather than seeking consolation in the next. In this sense Feuerbach writes that politics must become our religion: rather than glorify God, human effort must be directed to glorifying the human.

Feuerbach's reading may have been schematic and religiously naive, but it was politically accurate enough to be convincing. The socialist movement heeded his advice that politics must become our religion. The victorious Communist Party, in Russia and a generation later in countries which came under Russian sway in the wake of the Second World War, embarked on a systematic, self-conscious war against God.

Fifty years later, it is rather obvious that that war has been lost. Already in the early fifties in Czechoslovakia, at the time of the mass arrests of clergy and believers, the commissars reserved a special kind of fury for the clergy. Perhaps it was an echo of a growing awareness, even in the midst of revolutionary victory, that political movements come, have their day and disappear, creatures of passing socio-economic constellations (as Marx recognized) while religious faith, perennially human, goes on forever. Humans would worship God long after the Communist Party had been forgotten.

Nor did it take all that long. The Party succeeded in breaking the secular power of the church, confiscated its properties, shattered its hierarchy, persecuted the believers. Yet fifty years after the revolution, repeated waves of religious persecution and officially sponsored militant atheism campaigns testify no less convincingly to the continuing vigor of religion.

The failure of militant atheism, however, is not particularly interesting. It was, from the start, an artificial, abstract and theoretical creed. What is interesting is the

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success of atheism, or, more precisely, the success of the Communist Party in rooting out the church as a significant social force—and its effect, not on the church, but on the Party itself. Or, in Feuerbach's terms, when politics becomes our religion, what is the effect *on politics*?

To speak of the effect overstates the case: casual relations would be difficult to trace. But there is an intriguing concomitant variation: the increasing secularization of spiritual life has been quite clearly accompanied by an increasing ecclesiasticization of the Party.

We are not concerned here with the popular claim of the fifties that "Communism is a religion." Such a claim is both true and trivial, because it is based almost entirely on a superficial definition of religion as any belief deeply held and used as a guide in daily life. It amounts to no more than a recognition of the category of high ideology, and the recognition that both religion and Communism fit into that category.

We are concerned with a very different claim: that religion, in addition to being high ideology (like Communism), has certain characteristics (deification of an ideal figure, formalization of beliefs as dogma, ritualization of performance) which socialism and Communism, by their own emphatic and repeated proclamation, did not share or wish to share.

Specifically, Communists emphatically rejected both relative and absolute deification. In contrast to the elaborate hierarchy of dignity which creeps even into the lowest religious denomination, they adopted the title "comrade," experimented with abolition of rank in their armies, sought to equalize incomes, and insisted throughout on the humanity of their leaders. In contrast to the dogmatic cast of religious teachings, they insisted on the functional, practical, "scientific" nature of their beliefs. Generations of Party members learned—of late by rote—that Marxism is superior to Christianity because it is a this-worldly, non-dogmatic, practical guide to faith and morals. Finally, in contrast to the formal, ritual nature of religious performance, they insisted that their own activities are totally non-symbolic, practical, geared to actual transformation of an actual world.

Yet with the success of its anti-ecclesiastical campaign, Communism gradually acquired distinctly religious characteristics precisely at those points at which it claimed to differ. That this shift in fact took place is too familiar to require elaboration. The odes to Stalin to send rain or current eulogies to Mao in gratitude for sunshine are too familiar. So is the entirely scholastic nature of present-day Marxism: perhaps the most striking (though by no means the most damaging) instance is the argument of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia that prostitution does not exist, Q.E.D. It was left to the police and tion it is a result of exploitation and since equally by definition exploitation does not exist there, prostitution does not exst, Q.E.D. It was left to the police and Western tourists to figure out how to deal with the elegant bleached blondes loitering around Prague's Hotel Alcron. Similarly, the ritualization of Party work has been amply demonstrated by every aspect of Communist life, perhaps most clearly by the economic planning which produces plan and counter-plan and then depends on grey-market enterprise to keep the economy functioning. Having successfully eliminated the church as significant factor in the functioning of the society, the Party in turn became ecclesiasticized.

The familiar fact of this shift is significant precisely because Communism and religion are genuinely different and do represent fundamentally different strategies. Progressivism—and Communism is only one, not particularly successful, variety—represents basically a strategy of coping. To the ills that flesh is heir to it opposes the efficacy of human action. It seeks to relieve suffering, abolish injustice, change conditions. It sees human suffering essentially as a problem to be solved, not a mystery which calls for meditation and reconciliation. Europeans, Lenin included, often saw this as a typically American, practical approach. I shall long remember an American's response to the deeply moving film classic *La Strada*—"Something simply has to be done about child labor laws in Italy." Americans in fact do tend to respond to tragedy by "doing something about

it," usually picking up the pieces or providing asylum to survivors. But in the same way intellectuals frequently consider this as a typically proletarian response, Catholics as a Protestant one.

All such labeling is equally true—and equally false. What is true is that the essence of progressive strategy is precisely the ability to reduce mystery to a tangible problem, to respond to tragedy by effective action—and that this has not been the typical religious response. To be sure, religious ideologies have always included—and at times stressed—the practical aspects of their message. The Bible has Jesus answer the Baptist's question whether Jesus is the Messiah by pointing to concrete solutions to actual problems—the blind see, the lame walk and the poor have the good news preached to them. But within religious context, such acts have primarily the significance of *signs*, the original meaning of the word usually translated as miracle. The ultimate

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significance of such temporal victories is that they are signs of an eternal victory. They are symptoms, not the real content and meaning of the religious message.

The core of the religious strategy is finally not coping but reconciliation, changing not the world but human perspective on it. It is perennially relevant because human life, even in a hypothetical socialist society, intrinsically contains dimensions which are not amenable to the problem-solving approach. Some things, even if well managed, are simply givens to which humans must adjust—aging, disappointment, choice, death, but also joy, beauty and love are all incoercible givens.

The three distinguishing marks of religion which we mentioned, worship, dogma, ritual, all have their place in the context of religious strategy. Worship provides for a displacement in the most profound sense. It deals with tragedy, which constitutes an unmitigated, unmeliorable personal defeat, by shifting focus from the broken, defeated human to the grandeur of God. God's answer to Job is a classic instance: it does not solve Job's predicament, nor does it answer his questions—it solves no problem. But it makes it bearable by breaking Job's preoccupation with his own misery, placing it in the perspective of eternity.

The same is true of dogma. Unlike the practical teachings of the churches, dogma does not solve any problems. But it does provide a context of absolute certainty in a world which undercuts all certainty. Its significance is its practical irrelevance. It is not subject to shifting needs and demands of the temporal, rather, it represents something very much like a verbalization of eternity. The function of ritual is closely similar. Ritual solves no problems. It explicitly transforms behavior from the problem-solving level—which, we need to note, is precisely the level on which tragedy defeats humans—to the level of theater in a profound sense by transforming tragedy into poetry. Ritual makes joy, tragedy, and even daily life humanly manageable by transposing them from the level of problem-solving action to that of ageless *play-acting*—ritual!—*sub specie aeternitatis.*

Religion finally represents humans' most profound strategy for coming to terms with that which cannot be changed. As such, it is entirely compatible with a pragmatic, highly activist strategy of coping with what *can* be changed. There is no contradiction in principle between the most active possible resort to all the resources of modern medicine in coping with illness—and prayer. The two deal with different dimensions of the experience: the first with the problem of being ill, the second with the tragedy of illness—that I, who could be doing, living, loving, am forced to lie passively in bed, bear pain and face death. Penicillin can change the course of my illness, but it cannot change the fact that I am ill. I need both to cope—and to come to terms with illness, not in the sense of not wishing or striving to become well, but in the sense of incorporating the brute fact of illness in my life. Religion functions as logotherapy.

Religion becomes a socially reactionary force when it loses sight of the distinction, and offers reconciliation not as means of coming to terms with the fact, but rather as a substitute for effort to change what can be changed. The anti-religious stance of progressives is a response to this extension of religion into the realm of social strategy. As such, it is legitimate—to pray instead of working is vicious. But "militant atheism" goes further. It reflects a conviction that those aspects of human experience which elicit a religious response are only culture-deep and can be eliminated by cultural change. Progressives generally base their attitude to religion on the deeply held conviction that tragedy is profoundly unnecessary —that there are no irresoluble problems.

The persistence of religion suggests that humans know better. Epictetus starts his *Manual* with the famous sentence: "There are some things humans can change, others they cannot." Perhaps a more accurate statement would be that all of human experience has two dimensions, that of a problem and that of a given. The problem can be solved, yet the fact remains. Even choosing wisely and well means giving up, eternally, forever, another alternative. Modern Western thought operates with the basic triad, the synthesis of two antitheses, which is the very model of progress. Yet even the achievement of progress is paid for in rejected alternatives: value is not only created but also lost. The hidden fourth which completes the diamond of which the triad of progress is a visible half, is the dark undertone of loss, of the tragic. Progress is possible because we have learned to rejoice in victory rather than mourn over the fallen foe—yet that death is equally real. The birth of the new is paid for with the death of the old—and that dimension of loss remains as a perennial source of need for reconciliation. Even if progress were to solve all problems humans would still need religion, not as a means of coping, but as a means of coming to terms with the contingency of existence. If they are denied one form of religious strategy, they will invent another because the root of worship is not unresolved problems or ecclesiastical institution, but an intrinsic human need.

I am not now speaking on the problem level, about the trite question of the "cause" of religion. That "cause" may well be an overdose of mescaline sulphate, a projection of father-image, or the encounter with the true living God. Personally, I happen to hold the third theory, but that is irrelevant to the issue at hand. What concerns us is not the "objective cause" but the human function of religion: the need which it meets and the unique way in which it meets it.

That function finally is not merely cultural. The proof of that is not anthropological but existential: the recog-

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nition, which is one of the immediate givens of consciousness, that human existence presents itself to the human subject not only as a problem to be solved, but as a brute datum with which the subject must come to terms. There is the fact that I was born when I was, am confronted with a life and world I did not choose, face a death I did not choose. My life is subject to an infinite number of contingencies, fortunes good and ill, which even the most earnest and effective wishing and striving cannot change. The death of the six million, the tragedy of Czechoslovakia, the aching void of *La Strada* all can and must spur me on to struggle against tyranny, for the self-determination of the victims of Russian imperialism, for a change of child labor laws in Italy. But in spite of all such efforts, even if they were successful, the fact remains. If no resources were available to the subject except for practical, problem-solving coping, the fact of tragedy would be paralyzing. In face of the brute givenness of tragedy which my effort cannot undo, I would be simply defeated. I can cope and strive in spite of defeat to the extent to which I can make peace with the brute fact of tragedy, injustice, the arbitrariness of things. This is what religion does in the statement "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit," by placing tragedy into the perspective of eternity in worship, faith and ritual. Religion is not a substitute for a strategy of progress, but it may well be its precondition. By rendering unto God the things which are in God's hand, it leaves humans free to contend with the things which are very much in human hands.

It is on this basis that progressivism can build its program and its relation to religion. The starting point may well have to be a modification of the traditional formula which divides the world into those things which can be changed and those which cannot. The problem with such division is that religion draws that dividing line far too soon, resorting to strategy of reconciliation at times and in situations where effective action is possible. Conversely, strategies of progress draw the line too late—driving themselves into murderous fury by trying to change what cannot be changed. It may well be far more effective to recognize *two dimensions of all human experience*, the dimension of problem and the dimension of the absolute givenness. Everything, even death, faith and morals, is a subject to strategy of progress, to the extent to which it constitutes a problem. No limit *a priori* can be placed to human effort. But by the same token, all human experience includes a dimension of givenness which demands a strategy of conciliation and reconciliation: placing *all* of human life including its problems under the perspective of eternity.

Socialist strategies may well have become deificatory, dogmatic and ritualistic precisely because they failed to recognize the reality and autonomy of the religious dimension of experience. Precisely because it succeeded in eliminating the church as a live alternative, the Communist Party found itself driven to meet that need. It had to provide an object of worship, a dogma and a ritual. It did so—but in the process it became ineffective as an instrument of social change. Social change requires human leaders, subject to correction—not deified God-figures like Stalin and Mao. It had to provide a dogma, an anchor of doctrinal security—but dogma, precisely because it represents not a program, but a statement of ultimate confidence, cannot function as instrument of practical social analysis. It had to provide the perspective of ritual—but in so doing, it ceased to be effective as social practice. In seeking to fill the religious need, the Party became a very warped, oppressive church, while ceasing to function as an effective instrument of social change.

Somewhat ironically, a parallel development can be traced in the churches as well. Not content to leave to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, (and justified by Caesar's admitted mismanagement) the churches, under the name of "social gospel," embarked on a mission of social relevance, seeking to provide programs for social change. Quite understandably, they did not succeed: the entire orientation of religion is geared to a very different strategy. But in the process they often lost their unique power of placing human life under the perspective of eternity. The adage, "ora et labora," is well borne in mind not only for what it includes, but also for the order in which it does so.

It may be unwarranted optimism, but a more mature synthesis may well be emerging in our times. The changing attitudes of socialists towards religion is an indication. The early programs demanded militant atheism of all progressives—Sartre and the Soviet CP are anachronistic survivals of that stance in our time. Recent programs of the Austrian and German Social Democratic Parties speak of a vital religious faith as a significant complement to secular effort for social change.

There are hints of a parallel development in religion as well. In the early nineteenth century, the church turned directly against all efforts for social change. Later Leonine encyclicals took a different stance, admitting the legitimacy of efforts for progress under ecclesiastical auspices. Most recent Johanine encyclicals go further: they recognize the autonomous validity of social striving. At the same time, even denominations once most stricken by a fascination with the "social gospel" are beginning to recognize the distinctly religious dimension of the church, traditionally described as offering the "means of grace and hope of glory." Recent Anglican efforts at liturgical "reform," though they inevitably appear as misguided COCU-ism to anyone who appreciates the full beauty, magnificence and wisdom of Archbishop Cranmer's Prayer Book, still testify to a new awareness of the distinctly religious dimension of religion.

The development may not be clear, but the principle is. Progress cannot afford to be anti-religious. It must

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recognize the reality and autonomy of the eternal dimension of human existence, as well as its own inability and inappropriateness for trying to cope with it. A dying man needs a priest, not a commissar. So does a living man, confronted with the utter contingency of his existence, the givenness of joy and tragedy, the rigid limitations of his finitude and the infinity of the task.

But the converse is no less true: a starving man needs bread, not only a blessing. Progressives must not resign the responsibility for human welfare to religion. The perspective of eternity is not a proper perspective for coping with temporal problems. Those, too, are real and autonomous. Eternal perspective can free progress from the frantic, murderous attempt to create a secular substitute for God—but it cannot be a substitute for a human perspective. A strategy of progress, if it is not to be caught up in the murderous attempt to be God, must render unto God the things that are God's. But the purpose of that recognition is to set free for human effort the entire dimension of human life which belongs to Caesar. Since democracy involves the recognition that the things which are Caesar's are *rei publicae*, this means leaving to human effort the entire dimension of human problems and their solution, human progress. Progress cannot solve the eternal mystery of being human—but it can solve its temporal problems. A mature strategy of progress may well depend on the recognition that the two are distinct.

AN OPEN LETTER TO JOE O'ROURKE

DANIEL BERRIGAN

To hell with the glory of God; or, how we got rid of Joe

As most of our readers know, on August 20, Father Joseph O'Rourke, S.J., against the directives of his New York religious superiors, baptized a child in Marlboro, Massachusetts when the child had been refused baptism because of his mother's stand on an abortion issue. On September 5, Father Eamon Taylor, S.J., New York Provincial, wrote a letter to his Province: (published in the National Jesuit News*): ". . . Today I have a painful duty, that of informing you that Fr. Joseph O'Rourke has been dismissed from the Society of Jesus." Our editorial on the subject appeared in the September 20 issue.* THE EDITORS

Dear Brother Joe,

For friendship's sake, for my own sanity, for love of the Society of Jesus in trouble—for these and for many other reasons I want to write you this letter. It is a love letter. I love you, I love my own sanity, I love the Company, and I mourn the trouble of which your purgatory is a sign.

Moreover, I find it impossible to make even the smallest grain of sense out of the turmoil of the past weeks, except in the light of our friendship, our common and sweaty dedication to sanity, and our love of the Society of Jesus. Sense! Perhaps it is the intellect first of all, the feeling, passionate intellect celebrated by Ignatius, that is first victim of this outrage. I simply refuse to accept, in silence, or in peace, your eviction from the Jesuits, accomplished in the way we have witnessed. The decision to show you to the door is intolerable from every point of view—ethical, human, Christian.

I have pondered and prayed and talked; we have all talked ourselves into bone weariness about this; with priests and nuns, with people from all sides. One priest, a member of another order said to me: "I don't know what 'expulsion' means. In our outfit we have no process for it, we wouldn't know how to go about it." A nun echoed the same idea; among members of her congregation, there was an agreement in favor of "working things out," with the intractable, (the prophetic?) loner, the line-crosser, the nay-sayer, the etc., etc. A layman said to me; "In this case, Joe is running ahead, he takes the first fall. You'd better look to yourself." And when I demurred, not being attached to a domestic domino theory, he added, "I mean Joe's interceding for you."

That I could go with. There's always been a strange, heavy, willful, endangered bond among the brethren. During thirteen to fifteen years of studies when the kids are outside looking in, it's a way of huddling, coping; there are common adversaries, the 'dads,' the brahmins, superiors, professors. The bond grows, past ordination, into the struggle, the muck, fury, shuffled lives and geographies of the past decade. At the end, when so much wreckage lay around, when so many had departed, the bond still lies on us. Frayed maybe; but no medico

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I ever met could tell me how to live after the siamese surgery that cut me from the body. Maybe it's an anus I lack, maybe a heart; but in any case—

In your case, there is something quite special. Many Jesuits hadn't tasted the sixties at all. There were careerists, the Society was mecca and mentor. Such men were also sharing in that special and lethal American luxury— taking violin lessons while Hanoi burned. Jesuits (like other Americans) had been spiritually inducted into violence. Their historical energizers were not the saints or Jesus at all; many were in fact quite value-free; their ideal existence was a compound, a tower, a cover of ivy, a chapel to the side. The war? We were exempt.

But you weren't, Joe. And therein lay the rub; for you, and for others as well. It was the beginning of all our troubles. You went through civil trials, you endured and won friends in and out of the order; friends who, like you, were passionate about so simple a thing as the murder of children. You escaped going to jail only by the merest tic of justice. But you never gave up. And it was through you and others like you, that Woodstock in New York, became, at least to a degree, a center of resistance to genocide; it was because of you and a few other Jesuits that the old rundown flats on West 98 Street were tapped and watched by the F.B.I., that other consciences were aroused, that at least some came face to face with the most serious moral question of their, or our, lifetime.

Then Rome panicked. There were too many publicans and sinners around the place; stowaways, peaceniks, freeloaders, senior citizens, homosexuals, and (God save the cloister) women. There was fun in Funless City; a crash pad for the most unlikely types, all-night marathons that resulted in the bending and fracture of civil laws. Too much was happening; too fast, some said. The word about Woodstock was getting around; there were actually some Jesuits in town who were taking life seriously, the city seriously, the war. They were laying something out. They had gotten beyond paper-pushing and book-worming. Some of them were already in trouble, others were in the wings, drumming up support for their brothers.

It was like giving away $10 bills or free food in the old morgue-like lobby on 98 Street. Everyone came running.

In sum, the community was making itself guilty, in flagrante delictu, of "Theology, the study and practice of." Whereupon, Roma locuta; close Woodstock!

To digress: in the summer of 1973, I wrote a letter to a Jesuit paper, at their request. Something to this effect: I took it as a good thing that a Jesuit was playing chaplain to war criminals in the Nixon government, since even war criminals need salvation. But I took it badly that the same Jesuit spent his time, and our money, cruising around the world justifying the crimes of his masters. The sentiment evidently stirred few. Rev. McLaughlin survived; he emerged from an ill-timed absurd outburst of his superiors, kosher and clean as gefülte fish.

I find a particular twist of the knife in the episode. Evidently the worst sort of mucking about with obscene power is O.K. with Jesuit superiors; just as evidently, other sorts of activity are the occasion of top trouble. Like your activity.

Well, what have you been up to? It seems worth recalling first of all, that the Jesuit authorities have cleared the cardinals of New York and Boston of any part in your untimely demise. No pressures. Categorically not. So we are involved in a strict family affair. Our own brothers, " . . . at the conclusion of a serious process by . . . consultors and myself (Father Taylor) . . . as well as by Father General and his assistants, . . ." have handed you the ax, blade first.

The language of their letter of dismissal is unexceptionable. Pieties multiply; our work is invoked, our service of the church, our loyalties, the gospel and its priorities. It praises you, Brother Joe, almost beyond measure. Indeed the tone of the letter is a little like that of an old-time funeral. My father used to describe them; everyone who died Irish rated a eulogy. No matter the sense of relief at the passing of Paddy O'Paragon, or the sigh of relief issuing from under the widow's crepe. No, the deceased went out, and up, with a bang. Regrets, but relief.

That I think is the invisible writing of the letter that pushes your life, your ministry, your sacrament, to the wall; relief. The troublemaker is dead. By implication, a good troublemaker is a dead one, and vice versa. But in what sort of essence shall we dip such a letter, and the minds that drew it up, so that the truth may appear?

A bit of the truth comes out anyway; some by implication, some by silence.

First among your crimes and delicts (I find this delicious) your civil offenses are never mentioned. The letter of dismissal makes you a church mouse, given to wrong appetites, fits, starts, directions; and always in the sacristy. Yet as a plain matter of record, you are a felon in the U.S. dossier; you admitted to trashing the records of Dow Chemical in Washington, in 1969. Has civil non-violent crime then become acceptable, or of no account? What is a crime anyway?

Evidently your real wrong-doing began in June of 1971, in Fordham Chapel, during the ceremony of your ordination to the priesthood. There, you and one other misguided Jesuit yielded to a sulfurous suggestion. The other refused to impart the customary gesture of peace to the Cardinal of New York, who was conferring the sacrament. He went to the microphone to explain, in defiance of rubric and good order, the meaning of the refusal. You, meantime, stood at your place and said: "I too find it difficult to kiss peace with war. Until this

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bishop refuses the designation "military," and drops his investment in killing, I will hesitate in this gesture. But then, peace, peace in the end." Then you embraced the Cardinal, as prescribed.

I want, as simply as I know how, to say thank you for that small gesture (all our gestures are small; it is part of the agony of the times). When you refused to take part in that charade, I was in the intensive care unit of the hospital at Danbury, shipped there under guard, a federal prisoner. I learned of your act as I came around from a nearly fatal dosage of xylocaine. I remember the joy and gratitude I felt; a gentle jolt had been given to an unassailable authority who, presuming to speak in my name, was perverting the gospel and defaming us before history. All honor to you in a time of dishonor!

The second delict is an "illicit marriage ceremony . . . between two Catholics (performed), in the Ossining State Correction Facility, on June 16, 1974 . . . implying disregard for existing norms of delegation for a Roman Catholic wedding within the confines of the N.Y. archdiocese." (Letter of Fr. Talbot). There is much that is cloudy in this legal huffing and puffing. One could legitimately raise all sorts of questions here about the meaning of a sacrament first of all. How

indeed does the state get to decide that an imprisoned felon is ecclesiastically dead, no fit subject or agent of the sacrament? And how does the church get to agree with such an iniquitous law? And what does connivance with a caesarian decree of untouchability do to the body of the church, joined as in marriage with Christ our Lord? And in the instance of such rending apart of the fabric of His body and ours, His word and our consent, does not the contrary act (that of a disobeying blessing on a proscribed marriage) become the duty of a priest? I thank you for this act, for the danger it exposed you to, for the turning back at least in one instance, of the incursion of Caesar on holy ground.

So we come to the offense that brought the house down.

It was, in sober estimate, a tempest in a baptismal font. Bishops, I suppose, every day, almost everywhere, are tempted to blow their miters about deviances from church law. Priests north, east, west, south, baptize, bless marriages, shrive, hold eucharist, in ways the law forbids. Priests do these things, those of them who still have a shred of faith and a shred of community to breathe with. They do such things, the majority of them, without a qualm. The feeling is that the days of qualm are long over.

They have feelings about the law, and act on them. The law, by and small, is too narrow for life. Ninety percent of its ambience is indeed a dead ground; one is asked to apply oils, words, water, in a mortuary. Ninety percent of life (if we except those who visit the dead, carve tombstones and live off investment in this unreal estate)—most of life goes on outside. Where you, Joe, try to live, where many of us are trying to live together. Where people are starving and despairing and in prison and under bombs. Where whirring xerox machines are never heard and papal directives are unintelligible, and only the feistiest, most responsible, tenacious, trusting, unselfish priests need apply. The real world.

Meantime, in the American church, bad law is badly understood, applied in fits and starts; moody, ill-at-ease, retrenching, regrouping, its officialdom demoralized, its cultural roots stifled, its Nixonian enthusiasms swept away, its best people, priests, layfolk, nuns, functioning at the edge, or wearily enduring, or disappearing out of sight—the church limps on, relic, bare survivor, amputee, into the seventies. If one can discern anything salvageable in the encircling gloom, it is the feeling, generally unarticulated, commonly accepted and acted upon, translatable as a true and universal sense of the people; the feeling that the era of bad law requires, if we are not to go entirely bananas, an era of virtuous lawlessness.

And of course that says it badly. Lawlessness? I mean nothing romantic; something responsible and weighty. I mean adherence to the law of humanity, the law of community, the law of conscience, the law of Christ in fact, a law that allows for excesses and mistakes and distemper and extremes, with the one proviso that the agent be alive to human beings, aware of their struggles, and answerable to those he loves. And to those who love him. And through these others, his friends, brothers, peers, community, that he be answerable also to higher authorities, who presumably exist somewhat at the periphery of our lives, to encourage, stimulate, praise, bless, intuit; to exercise those high and special gifts of which Paul speaks. And now and then, yes, to reprove, to rein in. But in every case, to wait respectfully on the word of the community, to proceed only after, and in accord with their self-understanding and conscience. Then, and only then, and once or twice in a lifetime, and only after the most sensitive conscience among us is satisfied that justice has been done, that the 'crime' is flagrant and unrepented—to pronounce an anathema.

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Such conditions for your expulsion were simply not met, as we are bitterly aware.

But first, to the crime. You went to Marlboro, in the teeth of a Cardinal's order, and a superior's prohibition, to baptize a baby. The issue was undoubtedly complicated. The parents of the child made it clear they were not pro-abortion—to the contrary. But certain abortion freaks were promoting the baptism, as a way of dramatizing the issue. And you felt it was a foolish and criminal thing, to make an infant the whipping child of other special interests.

The superior at 98th Street, Father Fred O'Connor, responded with thumbs down, after the long discussion on the night before you went to Massachusetts. ". . . the action at Marlboro has so many loose ends that I am not satisfied the good you want would be accomplished, and I do not want you to put yourself in jeopardy for an action so ambiguous."

I have to tell you unequivocally that Phil and I both felt uneasy about the affair. We felt in sum that it was a classic example of a non-issue, that there would be heavy consequences for a lightweight gain. We felt sure that there were other priests than you, who would be willing to perform the baptism, in circumstances they would judge fitting and sensible. In fact the parents themselves, or any layperson, could have performed the sacrament, judging that solid reasons existed for doing so.

Why then you?

I should add too, that I would have baptized the child, if certain conditions were met; that the baptism was performed in the home of the parents, with a handful of friends present, and no newspersons. And if such appeared, or if the pro-abortion people tried to make hay of the occasion, the ceremony was off. Because I don't like mob scenes at a sacrament. Nor screaming nor cursing. Nor do I believe that people taking part in such a scene, with whatever good intention, are led to think more deeply on the meaning of the event, or to link their lives more responsibly with one another, or with the life of the newly baptized.

In any case, you had your day, before the cameras and crowds. And the mills of the gods were set in motion. Unlike the famous classical ones, these gears ground fast. It takes some fifteen years to turn out a compleat Jesuit; it takes, apparently, about two days to dispose of one. Such self-destructing machinery should be on display at the Museum of Modern Art!

Then the matter of secrecy, that ancient bugaboo of church, state and Jesuits. Immediately the process of dismissal started, the shutters went up at headquarters. No access, no mediators, no community voice. Those few who were favored with some word from the authorities, heard, by and large, one admonition; trust us.

It is a word worth pondering. Indeed, the sense arises that a one-way street is being laid out, paved and policed. Trust, more precisely, is being *used*; virtue as a cover. On the one side, the impenetrable metaphor of God's work in the world is invoked, a hard thing to get ahold of, in the divine instance, trust being the best response we can muster in a faulty and obscure cause.

But at least, one can argue in a bad hour (most hours) that the One asking our trust has laid something out on our behalf. There's some evidence for the conclusion that trusting Him is not altogether a cretinous assignment; the sermon on the mount, the passion and death of Jesus. Trust Me. Moreover, there are still some saints around, most of them in obscure corners, most of them unrecognized, some of them actively tortured, imprisoned, forgotten, reviled. Trust Me; such men and women, in fact, are a great deal like Me; the line is unbroken, from the holy land through the unholy history, to all lands, to the present.

I can buy that, Joe. You can too. Knowing as well, that trust in Him implies being trustworthy ourselves; and that worthiness of trust leads outward into the world, and by a hundred obscure strands, back to Himself. One's way of 'conducting' his life; to speak rigorously and in metaphor too. . . .

But what a debasement occurs, when this tenuous, living, endangered, ennobling, organic venture is uprooted bodily and clumsily retooled, to serve a bad scene. Trust me, the superior says, offering no reasons for trust. Trust me, though you haven't the slightest idea of what's happening, what way my decisions are going in disposing of your life, your future, your conscience.

It used to be called playing God, a bad business. Much easier than, say, playing human; a process that demands among other things, admission of fallibility, failures, put-downs, moral untidiness, humiliation. Much easier to drag in the paraphernalia of transcendence, draw the curtain of the holies around one's activity, invoke the penates, and like some supernal xerox, toss out one's decisions from within the impenetralia.

Trust me! In the middle sixties, I was urged, in just such words, to take in stride a certain command, filtered down through various levels of authority; the level issuing the command being, as usual, inaccessible. I was ordered to leave the U.S. forthwith for Latin America, with no return ticket. No reasons were given for the order, no interviews granted. I was advised by the local superior to obey, because (in some such words) this was the least punitive of the measures they were considering. No Jesuit house, from Syracuse (where I had taught for six years) to New Orleans, could be found to receive me while the necessary legalities, visas, etc., were being concluded. (Finally and reluctantly, Georgetown took me in for a week or so.) So I went south, in what seemed to me then (and still does) one of the absurdest hegiras of the century, a panicky order issued speedily, under secrecy; no holds barred, no reasons given.

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I bring up this ancient history, not in a mood of wound-licking, but because we must again resist these old creaky methods of human suppression; still coming down on us, forever refurbished with new rhetoric, fearful of human probings, interventions, communitarian impulse, criticism—the light and warmth and unsettling spontaneities of the truth. I have never learned how to cope with this 'peccatum perenne,' to this day I am unable to do so. I used to appear at the Fordham Fortress on command, explain as patiently as I knew how my latest trespassings and divagations, receive my birching and depart. Later I took to fasting for the day of wrath, appearing before superiors light of head and gut, creating for myself a kind of inner Day of Atonement. No better; I left as empty as I came.

During the same decade, I was urged on at least four occasions, with varying degrees of anger and frustration, to withdraw from the order. Once a court of peers was assembled to hear my current delict, which involved, as I recall, a decision to travel to Hanoi with a symbolic gift of medical supplies, thus violating U.S. law. A standoff ensued; they wouldn't condemn, they wouldn't stand by.

So I tried flipping my reactions around, for sanity's sake. Like this; why not consider such occasions as reinforcements, honors, decorations, instead of assaults? Could it be that authority, so conducting itself, was really granting me a backhanded compliment, and every time I received an official put-down, I should wear it up and down Fordham Road like a shiny new Croix de Paix?

A word seems to be in order too about those famous guidelines that the Woodstock Jesuits developed in the late hot sixties, a kind of community stakeout; where we go when the road signs are down. I liked their paper; unlike official pronunciamentos, there was some taste and smell of the real world in it. It tried, I thought, and succeeded to a degree, in bringing intramural questions like obedience, church questions like good order, down to earth, where they belong. It calmly said in effect that the question of obedience, whenever it was removed from the hands of local communities, became a cancerous question; out of control. It assumed that mature people would by and large be able to take care of their own lives, conflicts, activities, without outside interference. It implied moreover that authorities were guilty of such interference precisely to the degree that they zeroed in on local situations without sharing neighborhood table, altar, meetings. Finally, it insisted that the Brotherhood was not made up, locally or otherwise, of unconcerned professionals and freaky zealots; the first of whom were fated to tolerate the second, an inevitable evil, given the times. No, the guidelines said coolly that everyone was in the *S.S. Gospel* together, like it or not, bail, row, or sink. And that the cooler types precisely owed it—to themselves, to their brothers, to the bleeding world—to support and help further the edgy, lonely, uncharted work of resistance against the warmaking state.

Well, what place did all this leave for superiors? Not much in fact. They were invited, by implication, to keep out of the way, to disappear even. Hadn't the gospel said so, long ago; and hadn't the Lord so advised and so proceeded? "The gentiles lord it over one another; but you are not so to act. No, I say to you that the first among you is to be as the least. . . ." And again, "If I, your teacher and lord, have washed your feet, it is to give an example; you too should wash one another's feet."

Where do we go from here, you, I, all of us who have been sweating out these weeks in various stages of despair, frustration, fury, hope? Practically speaking, you must take our word for it; some of us, at least, do not consider the law, badly and even iniquitously applied, as the measure of our life together. We consider you a Jesuit as long as you choose to be so considered. We hope you will continue to pitch your tent here at 98 Street, to share our work, our songs, our booze, our prayer, our precarious life together, whose image is that old scow launched by the Lord's word, in tricky seas, bound for all the world, uncomfortable, mutinous, crazily unsinkable. We don't know how long we'll be able to keep this phase of the voyage going. But pitching you overboard, in the immortal image of the book of Jonah, is no acceptable way of calming the storm. Damn it, no.

Be our brother, then. Help us be brothers one of another, in the world, and to endure there. DANIEL

COLOR TELEVISION

THE SCREEN

The plot of the film *Claudine* is bracketed by a matched pair of episodes neatly placed, like bookends, so that they will contain everything in between them. In the first one, garbageman Rupert Marshall (James Earl Jones) drives up for his first date with cleaning lady/welfare mother Claudine Price (Diahann Carroll). This man is ready to ring Claudine's chimes. When he does, however, Claudine isn't home yet, and since her daughter won't let him in, Rupert has to go back to wait in his car. But as soon as he spots Claudine coming across the street, he hops out to try again. This time she has forgotten about their date and would rather cancel it. Only after he has turned on the charm extra-heavy does she relent and take him inside to witness the arguments and suffer the insults of her children. As

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Rupert sinks further and further into Claudine's living room chair, we get the feeling that what we are really watching is a man digging in to hold a beachhead.

In the other episode, at the opposite end of the film, the dilemma created by Rupert's first arrival on the scene is at last resolved. Again Rupert drives up in his convertible, but now he has come to say goodby—to say that he can't marry Claudine and give the kids a father after all because he just can't afford it. This time Claudine is already home and, far from forgetting he is coming, she has been standing hopefully at the window even though she had no reason to expect him. She is the first to greet him this time, and the kids fall in contritely behind her. What's more, instead of Rupert's having to fight to establish himself in the house, mom and all of the kids file out to join him in the car. It's a gesture of acceptance on their part that Rupert can't resist. He changes his mind and decides to stay with them.

What happens in between these two scenes all goes to show how badly Rupert is needed. Claudine's existence in this film is pretty much confined to the subsistence level—the level where all Earth Mothers operate. Her role is to cope with physical and physiological necessities: sex, sleep, food, elimination, that sort of thing. The argument the kids are having the first night Rupert comes, for instance, is about whose turn it is to use the bathroom. Beyond the general worry of feeding her four kids, all Claudine's particular problems are of this kind.

If her daughter doesn't come home drunk and puking, she comes home pregnant and crying. Then her son, as if to even things out, comes home to recuperate from a vasectomy. Absolutely everything that happens in Claudine's life involves some basic bodily function. Even her date with Rupert has for its background the advice of some friends that she can't sleep at night because she's sex-starved. That pretty well reduces romance to a subsistence level in her life too. Because of that lack of sleep, she nods off in the bathtub while Rupert is waiting for her to get ready for the date.

But Rupert at once enriches her life. As soon as he gets her out of the bathtub and through a chicken dinner, she is ready for a philosophical discussion. (They argue about their respective marital irresponsibilities.) And he has the same uplifting effect on her kids as well. While she's grappling with the pregnancy, the vasectomy and what not, he is providing the kids with spiritual benefits ranging from ice cream and companionship to a math lesson derived from a crap game. What it all amounts to in the end is situation comedy of the sort that, were the characters white, we might be more likely to see serialized on television. Although the medium is black poverty, the message couldn't be more prescribed and middle-class. Shining through all the disadvantages and rancor is the need for traditional mother and father figures. It's neither any worse, nor any better, than what one imagines *My Three Sons* or the Danny Thomas reruns to be.

If *Claudine* is essentially a sit-com, then Sidney Poitier's new film, *Uptown Saturday Night,* is some less-structured, coherent kind of TV fare—a variety show, perhaps, a black Ed Sullivan Show or Dean Martin Comedy Hour. The plot has to do with an honest but poor man named Steve (Poitier) who has stolen from him a lottery ticket which, a few days later, wins the million-dollar prize. Needless to say the fellow tries to get his ticket back, persisting in his search even when the ticket turns out to be in the possession of a bunch of gangsters.

Though this might sound like an action film, a thriller of some sort, it isn't. On the contrary, it's a series of character studies, cameos really, which are never anything more than vaguely connected either to the plot or each other. Even in the big chase scene at the end, where Steve clings to the luggage rack of a car from which hoodlum Greechie Dan (Harry Belafonte) is shooting at him, the camera work minimizes the action and accentuates the character acting. A close-up isolates Steve from his hazardous circumstances, dissipating any tension that might inhere in the situation in order to give Poitier a chance to do a bit more mugging.

Besides Poitier and Belafonte, the black comedians and character actors who get to do their *shtick* in the movie are Bill Cosby, Flip Wilson, Richard Pryor, Paula Kelly, Calvin Lockhart and Roscoe Lee Browne. Including the principals, that's a total of eight stars in this movie, or, as a little simple math will tell us, a new character every thirteen minutes. Obviously a script that machine-guns new roles at us like this is going to end up riddled to pieces. Not every role can score a hit either. Like all vignette comedy, the roles in this film are stereotypes, a parade of stock characters for Poitier and Cosby to react to. When the stereotypes are upset or are played in unexpected ways, the results can be funny. Richard Pryor's detective, Sharp-Eye Washington, provides the best few minutes in the film by being unobservant, rattled, dishonest and everything but a Sam Super-Spade.

On the other hand, Roscoe Lee Browne's Congressman Lincoln fulfills all our easiest expectations about the two-faced politician with a reversible portrait in his office showing Nixon on one side and Malcolm X on the other, depending on who his caller is. A few years ago when black films first began to be produced, it looked as if they would quickly choke on their own bile and die off as a genre. But that hasn't happened. If *Uptown Saturday Night* or *Claudine* are any indication, it now seems more likely that the black film will die from blandness instead.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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THE TROUBLES IN IRELAND

SEAN CRONIN

Northern Ireland: Captive of History

GARY MacEOIN

Holt, Rinehart, $10

The Bitter Harvest: Church and State in Northern Ireland

ALBERT J. MENENDEZ

Robert B. Luce Inc., $7.50

Francis Bacon's solution to the Irish problem was the Great Plantation of Ulster: Send in Scottish and English Protestant colonists; dispossess and transplant the natives. Bacon didn't plan the Great Plantation but he thought it a good idea.

Sir William Petty, the father of political economy, also had a solution to the Irish problem: "there being about 1,300,000 people in Ireland, that to bring a million of them into England, and to leave the other 300,000 for herdsmen and dairy-women behind, and to quit all other trades in Ireland but that of cattle only . . ."

Petty's master, Cromwell, had a less kindly solution. William of Orange had still another. Then there was the dark night of the Irish, the eighteenth century and the Penal Laws; and a hundred years later "the great hunger." In the twentieth century there was partition, now combined in Northern Ireland with something called "power sharing."

None of these solutions worked. There are political problems in the world for which there are *no* solutions and that of Ireland may be one. Harold Wilson's solution is a 78-member constitutional convention to draft a new political structure for Northern Ireland that the British Parliament can accept. As matters stand, Ian Paisley's coalition of rightists and fundamentalist Protestants will control the convention; what *they* want is power.

These two books suggest solutions, too: Gary MacEoin's more than Albert Menendez'. But both books were written when Edward Heath's solution was the topic of the hour—the sharing of whatever power Ulster's regional assembly would have by Catholics and Protestants. The idea never got off the ground. A general strike of Protestants killed it outright in 14 days.

The key figure in the continuing Ulster drama is Paisley, an opportunist in religion and politics whose closest associate in this country is the Rev. Carl McIntire of Cape May, N.J. At one point Paisley opted for a Northern Ireland fully integrated in the United Kingdom; at another, he said he had an open mind on a united Ireland; now he is working with the ultras led by William Craig, Harry West and John Taylor—three right-wing ex Ministers of the Stormont governmen —who want an independent Ulster o the Rhodesia model. Paisley is th man to rally the "Bible Protestant' masses for them.

MacEoin's book, as one would expect, is thorough, well-documented and above all, fair-minded. He is a native of Ireland and began his journalistic career there. He knows the country and its history; but the book's strength is his treatment of the contemporary scene. He has a solution involving the U.N. and Swiss troops—although Switzerland is not a member of the U.N.—that I find far-fetched. But he does shuffle the main factors convincingly: religion and politics and economics and whatever culture remaining that is not thoroughly Anglicized. And he seems to make a case for a secular united Ireland. It is common sense of course, but is Ireland ready for it?

In the North of Ireland, the main ingredient in the mix is religion rather than economics, as in the South, and Mr. Menendez' examination of the subject is one of the best I've read. He is an outsider, which is a strength in this kind of situation. He went to Ireland for the magazine *Church and State* and what he found there obviously appalled him as a partisan of the strict separation of Church and State.

"Despite protestations to the contrary," he writes, "this is truly the most vivid contemporary example of a religious war, despite very real economic and political factors."

That overstates it, I think. Northern Ireland is a small society and each

"God knows, I'd like to help, but..."

But what?

Do you really think God will let you get away with that? If you can't do things alone, join with others at your local church or synagogue. Example: in Atlanta, one religious group helps move families and elderly people who can't afford a moving service. The God we worship expects us to help one another.

RELIGION IN AMERICAN LIFE

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man no doubt values the integrity of his hatreds, as someone said, and he can find historical evidence for his bigotry and indeed his right to be a bigot. Religion has always been a divisive force in Ireland. But men have killed and been killed in the name of politics, not in the name of God. To put the whole blame on religion is to ignore the British role, curiously and foolishly colonial even to this day, which exploited religion in the name of Empire even as it did in India and Palestine and much later in Cyprus.

Both authors agree that the Republic is a near-theocratic state. Only the other day the head of government there, Liam Cosgrave, voted against a proposal by his own government legalizing contraceptives. Mr. Cosgrave silently insisted that the government had a place in every citizen's bedroom, be he Catholic or Protestant, and asserted it—silently—in the face of history and his countrymen. He probably put back the cause of Irish unity at least 50 years.

In the Republic, denominational education to university level is the rule and just recently when some weak-minded persons suggested that perhaps integrated education might be a good thing for a country with Ireland's problems, the bishops led by their Cardinal said no. Bishops in Ireland speak in loud whispers. Even their hints are Holy Writ for most politicians: when it comes to a clash between canon law and civil law the Church always prevails.

For these and related economic and political reasons the Republic of Ireland is quite rightly unacceptable to Ulster Protestants. Both authors make that point abundantly clear. Mr. Menendez, for example, examines the Republic's Constitution—a fine nonsectarian document until it comes to Article 41 which imposes "Catholic morality on the non-Catholic sector of population." And there's Article 40 which is the basis for censorship. Mr. Menendez says, and I have no evidence to dispute him, that "one can search in vain for Zola, Anatole France, Voltaire, Kant, Gide, Sartre, Bergson, Gibbon, Paine, Balzac, Hugo and many other literary luminaries in Irish public libraries."

Mr. MacEoin says that Cardinal Conway, Primate of All Ireland, declared in 1972 that the majority has the right "to prevent the minority from doing things their conscience allows" (Mr. MacEoin's words) and that divorce will never be permitted while Ireland has a Catholic majority. Mr. MacEoin describes the Republic as a "cryptotheocracy," but on his own accumulation of facts there is nothing "crypto" about it at all: it's as near a theocracy as makes no difference.

Both parts of Ireland are economic appendages of Britain. Mr. MacEoin says that "some 2,500 foreign corporations dominate the 'growth sector' of Ireland, north and south. . . ." Foreign capital pours in and Irishmen pour out because "the economy remains incapable of providing employment to all the citizens, and concentration of capital in technologically sophisticated activities with low labor content makes the worker ever more marginal."

The poor suffer and the poor die in the battle for Ireland's future.

Mr. Menendez's book suffers from poor proof-reading: the aforementioned Rev. Carl McIntire has his name spelled two ways in the same paragraph. Mr. MacEoin errs in some details such as calling Paisley a Presbyterian minister—he founded his own church and called it the Free Presbyterian Church of Ireland—and confuses Henry II, the monarch who tangled with Becket, and Richard II, who lost his crown to Bolingbroke.

These are minor shortcomings. It is clear that at some point the Irish people themselves must resolve their problems if the island is to have peace and prosperity. As Mr. Menendez observes, Ireland would be a united nation if its people were of the same religion. Even in this ecumenical age that's an impossibility. The alternative obviously is a pluralist society and a secular state—with politics and religion rigidly separated. Surprisingly, that may not be a utopian vision: some voices out of Protestant Ulster are urging something like it. It may be the final solution of the Irish Question. It is surely overdue.

The Methodist Revolution

BERNARD SEMMEL

Basic Books, $10.95

DEWEY D. WALLACE, JR.

This important book combines several knotty historiographical concerns which have long exercised historians by interweaving Eli Halévy's famous thesis about Methodism warding off revolution in England with the more recent problems of the relationship of Evangelical Protestantism to the Enlightenment and to social reform. That the attempt, for all its well-argued and significant conclusions, is far from flawless is an indication of the difficulty of the task.

Early in this century Halévy had asserted that between 1789 and 1815 Methodism had innoculated the English working class against the virus of revolutionary disorder, thereby sparing England the upheaval of the continent. Semmel previously edited a reprint of Halévy's seminal essay *The Birth of Methodism in England,* preceding it with an illuminating analysis of Halévy's intellectual milieu. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971).

Many have disagreed with Halévy since his views were first broached, but meanwhile the wider relationship of evangelicalism to social reform has been investigated, for both Britain and America, in such books as Charles I. Foster's *An Errand of Mercy,* Timothy L. Smith's *Revivalism and Social Reform,* and Raymond G. Cowherd's *The Politics of English Dissent,* to mention but a few. Further, several recent authors have sought to qualify the usual assumptions about "conservative" and "liberal" in the eighteenth-century by emphasizing the Colonial American Great Awakening as a vehicle of social protest and as related to the Enlightenment in complex ways (Alan Heimert's *Religion and the American Mind: From the Great Awakening to the Revolu-*

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tion would be a good example of this, as would the writings of William McLoughlin on Isaac Backus).

Semmel synthesizes aspects of these wider problems by probing into the thought of Wesley and Methodism in its formative years, carefully analyzing the social significance of theological doctrines. He contends that the Methodist revival was "a spiritual Revolution of a progressive and liberal character" and "a counter to revolutionary violence" (pp. 4-5). He uncovers an ambivalence in Methodism: a spiritual and social revolution of a liberal character which functioned significantly in the "modernization" of the English working class, its implications for politics were nonetheless pointedly avoided because of the conservatism of its leadership (following Wesley) and its dynamism channeled into such other directions as foreign missions.

Various aspects of Methodism as a revolutionary force are examined by Semmel: it is seen as a "modernizing" agent for the lower classes by creating "new men capable of exercising individual and collective responsibility at a time of the collapse of a hierarchical and paternalistic society; both Wesleyan Arminianism and Perfectionism are asserted to have given greater autonomy to the individual, and opened up to him the vista of future possibilities.

Yet in spite of such revolutionary influence, Methodism was rendered politically innocuous by a leadership which feared the specters of enthusiasm and antinomianism, both of which still echoed the disruptions of the Puritan Revolution. Methodist theology sought to avoid these pitfalls by emphasizing disciplined Christian living and rejecting the Calvinistic tenets of predestination and imputed righteousness. Semmel brings out quite startlingly the extent of Wesley's fear of antinomianism and the way his Tory and High-Church Anglican background prevented him, finally, from sympathizing even wtih Luther (p. 40).

Semmel concludes that Methodism was a balanced synthesis of forces making for revolution and order: "The Methodist synthesis, with its combination of the modern and the traditional and its peculiar resolution of the forces making for liberty and order, for revolution and counter-revolution, may be said to be at the heart of the success of Wesley and his Connection as the mediator between the traditional England of the *ancien régime* and that of the modern, industrial nation-state." (p. 171)

This book has many strengths: Semmel is self-conscious about method, careful in his use of evidence, and thorough in his analysis of concepts. He takes theological ideas seriously, seeking to trace social effects to doctrinal distinctions, so that his discussions of the social significance of the Wesleyan revival and of such doctrines as Perfectionism are excellent. There are occasions where one might disagree with the theological analysis, e.g., on pp. 10-12 in a discussion of works, justification, and free will he confuses salvation and justification, misleadingly suggests that Calvinist predestination obviates striving after holiness of life, and erroneously refers to Cranmer as an upholder of free will against Luther and Calvin.

Turning to a more significant matter, Semmel, contrary to much recent writing about Wesley which has emphasized his connection with Reformation theology, marshals a strong case for the importance to him of the High Anglican anti-Calvinist tradition on the one hand and the Enlightenment on the other. Thus Wesley comes out not only an Evangelical Arminian but also nearly a "Pelagian." However, while the arguments which relate Wesley to these are convincing, I remain unconvinced about the socially liberal consequences of this Wesleyan Arminianism in contrast to Calvinism.

It is part of Semmel's intent to reverse the view which sees Calvinism as the force ushering in the modern by breaking down tradition and to give that place instead to the Methodist revival: thus he implies (pp. 18-19, 94, 12) that the modernizing effects of Methodism are the results of its Arminian content. But the opposite can be argued: while ideally Arminianism with its emphasis on freedom ought to have made for that freedom in the political sphere and Calvinism with its determinism buttressed the traditional order, in fact, Arminianism had long been the theology of Tory Anglicanism and was later, as in colonial New England, the theologically "liberal" outlook of social "conservatives" who decried the revivalism of the Calvinists, whereas Calvinism was the theology of dissenting groups in old and New England with a revolutionary potential which the seventeenth-century had unmistakably revealed. It was the Calvinist emphasis on imputed righteousness and predestination which gave rise to that antinomian enthusiasm which was by Wesley and his Anglican critics alike seen as the greatest threat to public order.

Perhaps the Methodist revival needs to be seen then as a theologically more "liberal" but socially more "conservative" version of the earlier Puritan ferment, less radical precisely where it

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REVIEWERS

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was less Calvinistic. Wesleyan Methodism may indeed have been a factor in the modernization of the English workers and their transition to life in an advanced industrial society; but it also continued an earlier Anglican tradition of hierarchy and paternalism, which, as David Little has shown in *Religion, Order, and Law, A Study in Pre-Revolutionary England,* Calvinism bid fair to disrupt. That Methodism enabled England to avoid revolution is the measure not only of its success as a popular movement but also of its deep conservatism as a political force, i.e., its Anglican heritage, and although Semmel wants to downplay the revolutionary significance of the remnants of the older Dissent, it was in that ambience that radicalism best flourished.

The Great Houses of San Francisco

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CURT BRUCE.
TEXT BY THOMAS AIDALA
Knopf, $12.95

San Francisco 1846-1856 From Hamlet to City

ROGER W. LOTCHIN
Oxford U. Press, $12.50

WAYNE ANDREWS

The Age of Nixon may not be quite so reverent as the Age of Harding, but there is no doubt that Thomas Aidala, the architect who has written the text for this impressive collection of photographs by Curt Bruce of the carpenter-built houses of San Francisco in the nineteenth century, is something of an iconoclast. Although he nowhere mentions the name of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, the firm responsible for so many of the anonymous curtain-wall skyscrapers of our time, it is obvious that he is no friend of the architecture of anonymity. He is bored by the achievements of the generation that was schooled by the Bauhaus ethic of efficiency, and does not hesitate to suggest that there may be a connection between the once respected theories of moral purity and universality and the rise of totalitarianism. His heart is in the "truly explosive outburst of creative energy" of the nineteenth century, and he can hardly agree with the late Sigfried Giedion, who decided that "there are whole decades in the second half of the nineteenth century in which no architectural work of any significance is encountered."

To Aidala there is something delightful in the spectacle of a city like San Francisco, where maids, their fortunes built on silver speculations, were not above entertaining their former mistresses at six-course dinners. In the very short space at his command he is most informative on nearly every style the carpenters favored, ranging from the earliest houses—"as unassuming as the dented desires of those who did not float on the golden bubble of their ambition"—to more serious efforts, such as the Italianate Henry Casebolt house of 1865-66, or Joseph A. Leonard's Vedanta Temple. The thought of Turkish cupolas and Italianate porticoes hanging from Gothic buildings does not in the least embarrass him, and he deserves to be remembered as an affectionate guide to an area that invites a certain sense of humor. Entertaining he may be, but he is also performing a public service. For, as he reminds us, the forces of urban renewal are at work, and if you and I didn't get to San Francisco this summer, we may have missed more than one of the prizes he illustrates.

No doubt there are earnest people who will complain that Messrs. Aidala and Bruce have not dated each and every offering or gone into detail concerning the history of real estate developments. But these are favors we might ask, not of the authors of a book, but of the compiler of a doctoral dissertation.

There are dissertations which might well be preserved on microfilm rather than taking their place on library shelves. One of these—we must assume it was written as a dissertation—is Roger Lotchin's study of the first ten years of San Francisco, Professor Lotchin has all the diligence of a devout vacuum cleaner; he also has succeeded in avoiding answering nearly every question one would like to ask about the early days of San Francisco. For example, he gives us next to no information on the money makers of the city, and William C. Ralstom, the backer of the first Palace Hotel, is not even mentioned, although he was on the scene by 1854. Neither does the author have anything memorable to say about the French and Italian contributions, which may well deserve some attention. Nor does he take the time to be serious about the assimilation of the Spanish, despite one reference to General Vallejo. And while it is true that the murder of the journalist James King of William is not overlooked, the Vigilante movement and other signs of unrest are passed over as quickly as possible in favor of what Lotchin takes to be local color. We are told that "even those who had no one to greet hoped for a letter. From the moment the mail arrived, both eager residents and miners temporarily returned besieged the post office." He is aware of the importance in 1974 of women's rights. "Women," he tells us, "made up a large proportion of the milliners and boarding house operators in 1857-58." But shortly before this he informs us that "in the streets, boys flew kites."

A careful reading of Lotchin will convince almost anyone of the worldly wisdom of one college president who was not in the least concerned when told that a certain department at a certain college was not exactly famous for the books it produced. "We should pay professors," this president observed, "for not writing books. Think of the trouble we'd be in for if the doctrine of publish or perish were actually enforced."

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Michael Novak (Cont.)

had not too swiftly accepted it as Catholic. A baptism need not be rushed. There was time to point out the lack of fairness in the situation. A social rite belonging to all the people, to the ages, did not have to be so quickly seized upon.

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It was a young man's act, full of generosity. It displayed the temper of the times, a vehicle of evil as of good.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 51)

ular weekday occurrence (10 a.m.); it was chanted in Gregorian. We were told, though I didn't attempt to verify this, that most churches in Paris provide Latin Mass on Sunday. A priest told us that he attended one in Westminster Cathedral, London, on a Saturday. If in London and Paris, why not here? Really, it would be a most welcome relief from what we've got!

CHARLES WM. PHILLIPS

St. Louis, Mo.

To the Editors: Thank you for Michael True's article, "Latinization of West Roxbury" [July 26]. At the risk of contributing to what the president of England's Society For Latin In The Liturgy calls "that ancient Catholic periodical correspondence column pastime, Last week on the feast of X I went to Y and was appalled to find them doing Z'," I would like to take issue with one of Mr. True's points.

Will more of what put us where we are get us out again? Msgr. Martin B. Hellriegel, an American pioneer of liturgy, now pinpoints "optionalism" as "one of the great diseases of the 20th century." Dom Cozien, when repeatedly asked by visitors why the liturgy of Solesmes was so beautiful, would simply answer, "We do what it says in the book." The monks there now have embraced Paul VI's missal specifically at his request so that a fitting example for the whole world to draw upon be worked out. They have endured portions of the new missal that really are for parish use, (the *oratio fidelium*, or the enlarged lectionary aimed at the Never-But-On-Sunday goers for example), so that we might reap the benefits.

By a series of options, the new Roman Missal permits one to dispense with the new Roman Missal. We have had one of the options forced upon us in this country, and the Missal itself denied. St. Pius X, Valais and its ancien regime, as Mr. True contends, will not ultimately help. But neither will more balloons and beer-glass Masses.

Might I suggest that we simply be obedient for a change? That, for love of those who thirst after the Roman Rite, we do as the Sovereign Pontiff is asking? *Factus obediens usque ad mortem, mortem crucis.* Let us try the same. Who knows? We may catch ourselves thinking of heaven at Mass again.

JOSEPH O'CONNOR

New Left Novels

Minneapolis, Minn.

To the Editors: Because Walter A. Miller praised it [June 14] and the ad on the back page megaphoned its glories, I wrote that same day for a copy of *The Last Western* by Thomas S. Klise.

There are several things in this novel that I didn't like. It resembles New Left advocacy journalism. Its capitalists are dreadful human beings in every area of life, from love to politics; its Protestant ministers and cardinals are molded after a Billy Graham more evil than the Billy Graham who is silent on Nixon's crimes; and its Texans are like wanton boys who kill people for sport. Minority peoples from Brazil to Vietnam are never cruel and never invade their neighbors. I'm curious as to why an intelligent and hard-working author turns out paper-thin characters in a cardboard world.

This novel resembles one of a dozen I've read the last five years that tried hard to be up-to-date:

Lloyd Zimpel's *Meeting the Bear*, around the burnings by blacks in 1963 (1971);

Alan Lelchuk's *American Mischief*, on the student-radicals who occupied Columbia, Harvard, and a dozen universities in France in 1969-1973;

Mark Harris' *Killing Everybody*, because of the killing of the Kennedys, the shooting of George Wallace, and the murders of Lt. Calley's company in Vietnam (1973).

All of these now read like faded, yellow newspapers. If you try too hard to be new, you grow old-fashioned overnight. Or as Charles Péguy said, "Homer is ever new; nothing is as old as yesterday's newspaper." . . .

Novels which leave the imagination something to do excel those that minister to passive consumers. This one blunted my imagination.

JAMES C. WHITE

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Honduras

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Theology

Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B., Louis Bouyer and Dr. Paul Minear are three of the visiting professors for the Spring Term, 1975, Department of Theology, Catholic University, Washington, D.C. Contact: Fr. James Coriden, Department of Theology, CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY, Washington, D.C. 20064.

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To the Occasional Reader:

THIS OCTOBER 18 ISSUE is a good sample of *Commonweal's* timeliness and topicality. Our Washington columnist, Sisyphus, presents an authoritative analysis of the performance and responsibilities of the nation's communications media in such crucial matters as Watergate and related affairs. Professor Erazin V. Kohak of Boston University, who has written a number of *Commonweal* articles on Marxist countries, discusses Religion and Social Progress.

Also in this same issue Daniel Berrigan addresses a far-ranging open letter to Father Joseph O'Rourke, who was summarily dismissed from the Jesuits for baptizing the Morreale baby. And Michael Novak presents his views on both the O'Rourke case and that of the *Michigan Catholic* journalist whose column was recently discontinued.

Informative as this week's sample is, you will only be able to discover the full force and unique flavor of this lay-directed journal of opinion by reading successive issues of *Commonweal* for several months. To make this possible for you at a minimum of inconvenience, we are offering a trial subscription of 12 issues for only $3—over 400 pages of meaningful political, cultural and religious comment at a saving of half the magazine's single-copy price.

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